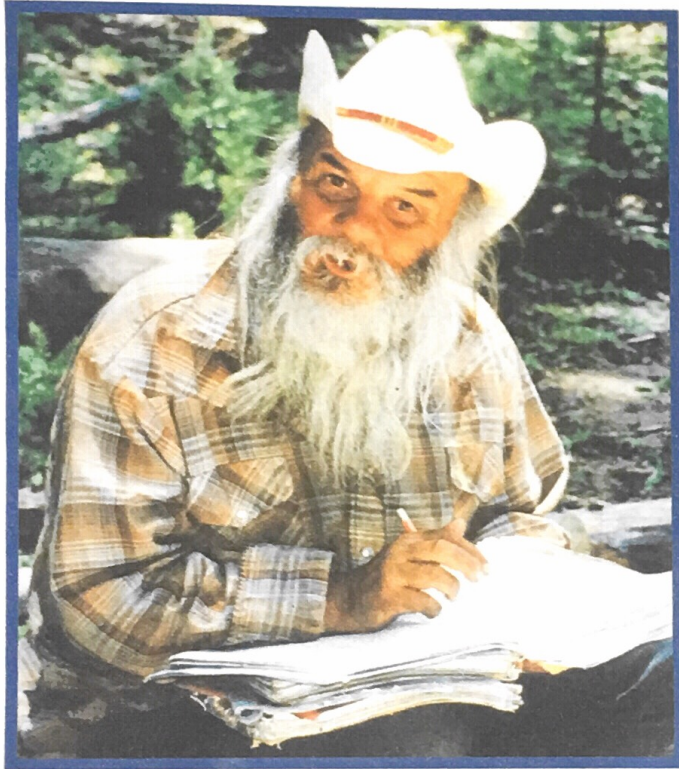




Rainbow Family

Life Stories



by Jodey Bateman.
Interviews with Rainbow
Family of Living Light
folks conducted between
1977 and 2008.

Scanned in 2018.
Jodey Bateman may be
contacted on Facebook.
or jodey.bateman@yahoo.com

15.B

BIRDIE - "Open Your Heart and
Come Out of the Box"

7 pages

[15.B]

① Birdie (with comment by Garrick)

Open Your Heart and Come Out of the Box

I was born in Worcester, Massachusetts, August 7, 1958. My name is Elizabeth Anne Guzmán. My father was Amado Juan Guzmán. When I was an infant, my dad saw my lips purse like a little bird looking for a worm. He said, "Oh, look at my little birdie - she wants to eat." I became Birdie.

My grandfather was also Amado Juan Guzmán and my great-grandfather was Amado Juan Guzmán. He came on a boat with horses from Spain to Mexico and married an Aztec woman, my great-grandmother.

My father was born in Germany. His mother, Katherine Mencke, moved to the states in Hitler's time. My father was a traveling magazine salesman when he met my mom in Massachusetts. He spoke seven languages.

My parents got divorced and my father moved to Santa Fe. When I was 16 in 1975, I went there to visit him. And I went to the Hermandad de Cristo, the Christ Brotherhood, a Jesus freak group. They sat in a circle and O Med, I thought that was kind of cool. I didn't join them, but I learned to be non-materialistic from them. I gave away my watches and gave away my cigarettes every day.

One day I went to visit them and they told me about a wonderful Rainbow Gathering in Arkansas. My father wanted me to visit my grandfather in Mexico City in late May or June, 1975. It was before the Rainbow Gathering, which I didn't want to miss.

I got to Mexico and my grandfather decided he was keeping me and sending me to school there. He was very definitive about it - a true Spaniard. But I kept the Rainbow Gathering in mind and said no.

My grandfather was angry. They tried to persuade me to stay. But I did go back to Santa Fe with my father.

I left Santa Fe with my thumb out, never having hitchhiked before, going towards Arkansas.

② I found a caravan of buses and trucks searching for a Rainbow Gathering site. It was scouts, but there was a lot of extra people that jumped on. We went to a few sites that were undesirable, but then we found an old-timer named Ebby Cromley, who welcomed us to his mountain with open arms. He said that the locals in Arkansas had a rumor that California hippies were gonna invade and there we were.

There I met Bear and Peanut and Phil and Freedom and Mariah. They were all sitting around a campfire singing songs like "Shady Grove" and whiskey-drinking songs. I felt right at home.

I followed the Rainbow Family, inter connected to the STP Family and the Hog Farm people. My older brother Cracker Jack is an STP-er so I was mostly with the STP Family. Not that I was an STP member, I don't want people to label me anything.

I spent the winters mostly with the STP and the summers with Rainbow. My life was a whirlwind of moving from city to city for the next seven years.

The first few years I would just show up at Gathering me a week before and a week after. I had so much happen in a short time that I forget a lot because it was so exciting.

Me and Chuck Wilson started hanging out. We went down to Brownsville, Texas. The rain was pouring and we were hitching. We were singing and not giving a care and the rain stopped. We looked over and see a cornfield - ancient cornfields with old cow ~~cow~~ dung.

Chuck said, "Where there's ~~cow~~ dung there's mushrooms," so we walked over and climbed over a fence into the fields. We was sitting on a rock and we said a prayer to God. We looked over and then we saw mushrooms everywhere we looked.

And putting a finger under the mushrooms purple was all on our fingers.

③ So we saw scarabs and butterflies, just wonderful. We spent such a time in the wonderful world of wonderment. We danced through the fields. We saw a mother mushroom with baby mushrooms. There was no time and then we decided it was time to go and we thanked Mother Earth and went back to the road and hitched down to Mexico.

Chuck was always in a hurry, so enthusiastic. He was driven. He was always two steps ahead of me on the highway when we were hitch hiking. The journey was so wonderful that if you are in a hurry, you miss the present. I would say, "Slow down, Chuck," and run after him.

After a while me and Chuck hitched to the East Coast to see my family and wait for my brother Cracker Jack. Chuck didn't want to wait for my brother, so that's where we parted and I lost him.

I left Massachusetts hitch hiking with my brother. We went to Boulder, Colorado, I believe. I hung out with the STP Family until gathering time in New Mexico in 1977. I was 18. I went on a hippie bus. The STP Family frowned on me going off with the hippies.

I should have wrote this down as the years went by because things that happened to me were so incredible.

After the New Mexico Gathering, we were given a school bus - me, Freedom, Mariah, Gary Estwing and Tony Angel and Chuck Windson. But Chuck joined hands with Patty at that time. We caravanned up to Montana. We stopped in Oregon and picked up two sisters. One was named Crystal. I forget the other one's name.

The men were so star-struck by those two girls so, me and Mariah and Patty decided to leave the bus and hitch up to Portland to meet up with my brother Cracker Jack.

So the three of us had a grand time. We met some wonderful people. It was about a two-week respite from the guys. We re-joined them in Washington State.

We went to Chuck's cousin in Bozeman, Montana.

④ We worked real hard cutting and ~~selling~~ firewood. We made a lot of money selling wood. I loved it, I was a hard worker in them days.

We milked cows, Chuck's cousin had about 100 head of cows. We were going through Bozeman in the bus when the motor blew. By this time we had lost most of our passengers. The two girls had gone when the hard work started.

There was the core group - me and Tony and Freedom and Martha. We called on the radio station trying to sell the bus. I remember we were sitting in a bar when this guy named Gypsy bought the bus for \$2,000 and offered each of us a free tattoo. That's when I got my regulation Golden Eagle tattoo with an 8-inch wing span and mountains and a sunrise and a rainbow over the breastbone. Oh my God, it hurt!

It was a one-shot deal. The guy said, "Don't move, I have to do it all now." I held Freedom's hand as tight as I could and I drank a whole bottle of Jack Daniels to kill the pain.

From there we went to Barry Plunkert's uncle Louie LaRocque at the Thompson River Ranch in Thompson Falls, Montana. He owned a bar and a restaurant. He was very fond of Tony Angel. He loved us all, but Tony had an in with him.

I worked for Louie at his bar. I cooked and cleaned. The loggers at the bar were quite fond of seeing us women swimming up river naked and sunbathing on the rocks. We got word of that afterwards. I had thought I was anonymous, completely invisible.

Me and Tony had hitched up. We decided to go from there on a vacation. I had earned a considerable amount of money at Louie's bar.

We went to Seattle and got on a ferry to Kenai, Alaska and hitch hiked to a lady named Oro's house. She was wonderful. After that we went to see Badger who had a tree house in the Banana Belt of Alaska overlooking the ocean in Homer, Alaska. There we stayed until it started getting too cold for us with our hippie moccasins and our lightweight gear. We went back to Montana and worked for Barry's Uncle Louie.

⑤ There was years when I spent with Tony and we were supposed to be trucking partners but he was a hard man to be with. I never called Tony my old man but he was pretty territorial.

Tony had had a hard time in the Service. He has shrapnel in his head and body. He was a kind person with a heart of gold - one you could depend on in a pinch, but he was an alcoholic.

He fell in love with me and he tried to capture me, but I was an uncontrollable bird. He tried to use force when he thought he was losing me.

I'm one of those that when I'm your friend, I'm your friend for life. I could take a battering when I tried to save him, because he was worth saving. He was one of a kind, one of the tightest brothers you could ever have.

We hitch hiked back east with a beautiful husky dog. Halfway across the country it was cold, the wind was blowing, we had been there for six hours. A trucker named Jack Rabbit picked us up. He took us back east. That's when me and Tony parted. I stayed in Massachusetts and he went to Maine. That was in 1982 - the last time I saw Tony.

I was still with Tony when Chuck Windsong made the call that I should carry the Stone of Many Faces. Chuck is very spiritual. I think the gods talked to him. I didn't want to carry the Stone, I wasn't interested in it.

I was alone, hitch-hiking to Winfield, Kansas, going to a fiddlers' festival. I got picked up by two hippies from Omaha, Nebraska. It was very hot and we stopped at a quarry full of water to go for a swim. We all got out. I left my bedroll in their vehicle. It had my huge leather skirt wrapped in it and inside that, wrapped in swaddling clothes, was the Stone of Many Faces. I got out of the water and put on my clothes and they were gone. I walked over to where their vehicle had been and there was no vehicle there.

⑥ I had nothing. I had lost everything. All my gear was in my bedroll. I didn't go to the Festival. I hitched to Massachusetts.

I think those hippies took the stone to Omaha and it's in a museum. I don't think it's lost for ever. It was too special for that. I do think it will re-surface.

COMMENT BY GARRICK

ON STONE OF MANY FACES

We got the tablet because of the corn. The story is really about the corn. The tablet is the connection between us and the Hopi legends. We got it after we planted the Hopi corn. The table became our connection with the Hopis. They told us that we had to show ourselves part of the Warriors of the Rainbow. Anybody can wave a palm frond and enter Jerusalem, but who can make peace among the nations?

They said we could show this by stopping the coal mining on Black Mesa. Some of our people who were in the circle in front of Grandfather David's house were part of the Black Mesa Trust that finally got the coal mining stopped there in December, 2002. This is the first time this part of the story has been told.

BIRDIE - LIFE STORY - CONTINUED

I ended up by hooking up with Jack Rabbit. I traveled in his truck for about a year and when I found out I was pregnant, I settled down in Massachusetts and never traveled again.

I got back together with Biff, the guy I knew since I was a kid, a childhood sweetheart, and we started having a family. I have seven kids now, five girls, two boys.

After I settled in Massachusetts, Moshe Blatt let me and Biff and some other people use the farm he had in Acton, Maine, and that's where I raised my kids.

⑦ We had pigs. My son entered a pig scramble at the county fair and caught the first pig. We got to keep the first pig and mated it. The result was that we had a hundred pigs on the farm.

We went to the Minnesota Gathering in 1990 in a bus with a bunch of STP'ers including my brother Cracker Jack and we went to the Vermont Gathering in 1991. This gathering Wyoming 2008 - is the first one I've been to since then.

I have discovered that the Gathering has entered the hearts of the youth and many, many people from around the world that otherwise would not have wandered into the mountains in such a free movement. Many people open their hearts and come out of the box of normalcy.